True Stories 2
TO THE TEACHER

GENERAL TEACHING NOTES

The techniques in this section can be used when teaching any unit in *True Stories 2*. You might want to try some of these techniques as you work through the book to add variety to the lessons.

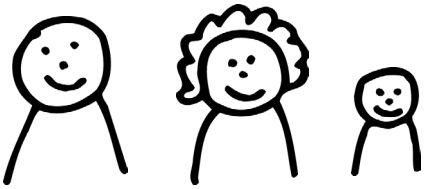
PRE-READING

In the pre-reading exercise in the textbook, questions and a photo pique students' curiosity about the content of the story. To give students even more pre-reading support, you could supplement that exercise with one of the following activities.

A Tell the story while illustrating it.

Tell students the story before they read it, stopping well short of the ending. As you tell the story, draw 5–10 pictures on the board to illustrate it. Following are some tips for drawing.

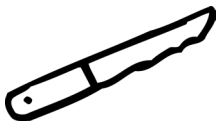
1. Keep it simple! To draw a person, most of the time just drawing the head and shoulders suffices—no need to draw arms, legs, feet, ears. A few squiggles to represent hair indicate the person is female; no squiggles indicate a male. Smaller heads and shoulders are children. Add two dots for the eyes, a dot for the nose, and a line for the mouth, and the figure is complete. For example, the figures might look something like these:



2. Use the same symbols consistently to represent the same things so that students get used to your drawing style. For example, two parallel lines with a triangle-shaped roof (resembling a child's drawing of a house) represent a building. A dollar sign inside means the building is a bank; a shopping cart indicates it is a supermarket.



3. Draw nouns to represent verbs. For example, draw a knife to represent "to cut."



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4. Feel free to move back and forth between drawing images from the story and acting out scenes. You could pretend to pick up items you drew on the board (such as a bottle) and use them as props in your reenactment of a scene. Or you could interact with objects you drew. For example, you could knock on a picture of a door.

Drawing tips 1–3 are the suggestions of Norma Shapiro, whose reference book *Chalk Talks* (Command Performance Language Institute, 2010) has further tips and hundreds of examples of simple drawings.

B Invent a story.

Instead of telling students the actual story, guide them into fabricating an alternate version of it by asking questions and encouraging students to guess the answers. Here, for example, is how a pre-reading question-and-answer session for the story "Love or Baseball?" (Unit 10) might play out:

Teacher: This story is about a young man. What's his name?
Student: His name is Ramón.
Teacher: OK, his name is Ramón. What's his last name?
Student: His last name is Martínez.
Teacher: OK, his last name is Martínez. What's his favorite sport?
Student: It's soccer.
Teacher: OK, his favorite sport is soccer. Ramón wants to watch an important soccer game on TV. When is the game? On Monday? On Friday?
Student: It's on Sunday.
Teacher: OK, it's on Sunday. Poor Ramón! He wants to watch the game, but he can't. Why not?
Student: His TV is broken.
Teacher: OK, his TV is broken. What does he do?
Students: He fixes his TV. / He buys a new TV. / He watches the game at his brother's house.
Teacher: OK, maybe he fixes his TV, maybe he buys a new TV, or maybe he watches the game at his brother's house. *(At this point, the teacher recounts the fabricated story.)* That's our story. Now let's read the true story.

After each student answer, you could draw a simple picture on the board. (Please see drawing tips above.) After reading, go back to your illustrations of the fabricated story. Recount the fabricated version; students supply the facts from the true story. (*We said his name was Ramón, but his name is* _____.)

C Pose pre-reading questions.

If your students are comfortable speaking English, you may wish to guide them into posing their own pre-reading questions. After the class describes the photo and reads the title of the story, ask, *What do you want to know?* Write the students' questions on the board. Return to the questions after reading the story to see which were answered.

POST-READING

Each reading is followed by Discussion and Writing exercises. You could supplement those exercises with the activities below.

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A Rewrite the story.

If students have solid writing skills, they can rewrite the story from a different point of view. For example, students could retell "Together Again" (Unit 14) from the point of view of Victoria or Alejandro Lorenzo.

B Role-play.

Students write a short skit based on the story and then act out their roles in front of the class. For example, students could role-play a possible conversation between Joe and his girlfriend (Unit 10) after she sees him at the store without his wheelchair and bandage.

C Write a disappearing summary.

Students, working as a class, summarize the story. The summary should consist of 5–10 sentences. You write their summary on the board, correcting errors as you write or after the summary is complete. Read the first sentence of the summary; students repeat in unison. Erase a word or two of the sentence and say it again; students repeat in unison. Continue erasing words a few at a time. After each erasure, say the sentence and ask students to repeat. Ultimately, students will be saying a sentence that is totally erased. Repeat the process with the remaining sentences. When all the sentences have been erased, ask students to recite the summary from memory. (Pointing to the places on the board where the erased words were sometimes facilitates recall if students falter.)

D Write true/false sentences.

First, write three sentences on the board as a model. Explain that two sentences are true, and one sentence is false. Ask students to identify the sentence that is false. You could, for example, write three sentences about your classroom:

This is Room 131.
There are 28 desks in this room.
The walls are yellow.

Next, students write three sentences (two true and one false) about the story. When they are finished writing, they give their sentences to a partner. The partner reads the sentences and crosses out the sentence that is false.

UNIT TEACHING NOTES

In this section, you will find additional information about each story. This information is not included in the stories because doing so would have made the story too complicated or too long for the allotted space. Yet the information—in many cases, the story behind the story—was considered too interesting to leave out entirely. So it is offered here. You might want to share this information with your students if they seem puzzled or curious while reading, or if it clarifies questions that come up during the class discussion. In many units, teaching tips that are specific to the unit follow the information.

A photo accompanies each story in the student book. Every attempt was made to obtain an authentic news photo, but that was not always possible. Some news photos were too grainy or blurry by today's standards; some were not available for license; and sometimes no photo was taken when the event occurred. In those cases, an engaging photo that fits the theme of the unit accompanies the story. You can tell which photos are authentic news photos: They have captions that identify the people, places, and things shown in the photo.

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UNIT 1 Dish Soap for Dinner

Lever Brothers, the manufacturer of Sun Light dishwashing liquid, mailed out 52 million free samples of its new product over a two-year time period. The National Poison Control Center began to notice that calls to local poison control centers came in clusters and that those clusters coincided with regional mailings of samples of Sun Light. The most dramatic evidence of cause and effect occurred on the East Coast of the United States: After 20 million samples were sent to homes there, poison control hot lines lit up with calls from people suffering from diarrhea and vomiting. By the time the correlation between calls to poison control centers and mailings of the soap became evident, the promotion had ended. According to *Newsweek*, approximately 1,000 people ate the soap.

After the free-sample fiasco, the manufacturer retained the picture of two lemons on the bottle, but replaced the words "with Real Lemon Juice" with the words "with Citrus Burst."

TEACHING TIPS

A Many teachers like to introduce this story by passing around a bottle of lemon-scented dishwashing liquid. Ask students to look at the label and sniff the bottle. Then ask, *What is this for?* After they answer, *For washing dishes*, ask them, *Is it for putting on salad?* Tell them, *The man in the story put soap on his salad and ate it. Why?*

B The Discussion Exercise asks students to share stories of mistakes they made. Initially, students might be reluctant to share their stories. If you have a story about a mistake you made while traveling or living in another country, begin the discussion by telling the story. That often gets the ball rolling. Also encourage students to share strategies they use so they don't make mistakes.

C If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on shopping and reading product labels.

UNIT 2 A New Man

Roley McIntyre was chosen "Slimmer of the Year" by a British reducing magazine. Before he lost two-thirds of his body weight, Mr. McIntyre was wider than he was tall (height 5′10″; girth 6′6″).

Roley and Josephine became the parents of four children and the foster parents to more than 25 others.

TEACHING TIPS

A Teacher Anjie Martin suggested an alternate Writing/Discussion exercise. Students make two lists under the headings: *Food I Like That's Good for Me* and *Food I Like That's Not Good for Me*. They compare their lists with a partner's or contribute a few items on their lists to master lists on the board. The activity can foster a sense of community when students discover they share a taste for many of the same "good" and "bad" foods.

B If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on health or food.

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UNIT 3 The Runner

Sigrid Krohn de Lange was running through the streets of Bergen, Norway. In an interview with a Norwegian radio station, she described her experience with the Bergen police. The *True Stories* version of the story is based on her first-person account, which is as follows: "They thought I had escaped from a nursing home. A motorist had called the police to say there was a strange lady running. The police officer could not believe that such an old lady could be out jogging. I said there was nothing wrong with my head or my legs. He had to check that I lived at the address I gave him. When that was clear, I could continue my jogging."

TEACHING TIPS

A An alternate Writing / Discussion exercise might be asking the class to work as a group to generate a list of things old people enjoy doing in their native countries. In a multicultural class, the resulting list might illuminate some cultural similarities and differences.

B If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on giving personal information (phone number, address, etc.), leisure activities, or health.

UNIT 4 The Love Letters

Several sources credit United Press International (UPI) for this tale of unrequited love. It dates from the 1970s. UPI's computerized files do not go back that far, so the *True Stories* version could not be adapted from primary sources. The story is, however, true; the UPI reporter in Taipei at that time recalls writing it.

It is not known if Lee and the mail carrier lived happily ever after.

TEACHING TIPS

A After students read the story, you could ask them, *Do you believe in love at first sight? Raise your hands and vote. Who thinks that love at first sight is possible? Who thinks it's not possible?* Ask them to share the story of anyone they know who fell in love at first sight.

B In the Discussion Exercise, students choose the five best ideas for winning someone's love. In my class of adults, I often separate the men and women and ask each group to choose by consensus the five best ideas. Then the groups reunite and share their top five ideas. I've done this activity many times, and I don't think the men and women have ever come up with the same top five ideas.

C You could also follow up the Discussion Exercise by asking students if there are any stories in their family about winning someone's love in a unique way. For example, how did their father win their mother's love, or their mother win their father's love?

D If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on family and relationships.

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UNIT 5 Bad Luck, Good Luck

Vegard's name is pronounced VEH-gard. His last name is actually Sjaastad, which was changed to the more easily pronounced name Olsen for the story. He lives in the western Norwegian town of Aalesund.

In Norway, all Visa cards have the owner's photo embossed on the back. When the thief presented the card to Vegard, he gave it to him photo side up. "It was like I met myself in the doorway," Vegard said in an interview with the Associated Press. The thief did not seem to recognize Vegard from the picture. Vegard said, "I wasn't going to play hero. I'm pretty calm by nature. I just accepted the card and said, 'I hope you enjoy the meal.'" When the police went to the thief's house, they found not only Vegard's wallet, but also other goods they suspected were stolen.

TEACHING TIPS

A This story affords an opportunity to discuss identity theft. Many Web sites give tips for preventing identity theft, including steps to take if an I.D. has been stolen.

B The story also invites a discussion of the pros and cons of credit cards. You might begin the discussion by making two headings on the board: *Credit cards are good* and *Credit cards are bad*. Students supply reasons that support each statement.

C If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on reporting a crime.

UNIT 6 Lost and Found

The triplets had more in common than their appearance: They all liked Italian food, soft rock music, wrestling, and the same brand of cigarettes. In an interview with *Good Housekeeping* magazine, each triplet reported having recurrent dreams in which he had a brother who looked just like him.

According to the 2018 documentary *Three Identical Strangers*, the triplets may have been intentionally separated so that they could be the subjects of a study on the effects of nature vs. nurture. Periodically researchers tested the boys, but neither they nor their parents knew exactly why they were being tested. Neither did they know that an identical sibling was living just a few miles away. Adoption agencies no longer separate multiple-birth children.

Described as "natural clowns," the brothers were popular guests on TV talk shows in the months after their 1980 reunion. Eight years later, they teamed up to open a successful restaurant (called Triplets) in New York City. Bob Shafran later left the restaurant business to enter law school. Eddy Galland died in 1995.

UNIT 7 Try, Try Again

Mrs. Cha took the test for her driver's license regularly for four years. At first, she took it five times a week but then settled on a twice-weekly schedule. "I didn't mind," she later said. "To me, commuting every day to take the test was like going to school. I always missed school."

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One of seven children, Mr. Cha spent her childhood working in the fields. When she was 15, she enrolled in school (as a fourth grader) but dropped out a few years later. Because of her poor literacy skills, she was unable to decode the words in the test preparation materials. So to study for the multiple-choice test, she practiced matching questions with the correct answers, without really understanding the content. "It's not easy to pass the test that way," an official at the regional driver's license agency told a reporter for the *New York Times*. She studied at 4 a.m., before she picked her vegetables, and in the evening before bed.

Mrs. Cha appeared in a 30-second South Korean TV commercial for Hyundai, the car company that gave her the car. (To view the commercial, search "Cha Sa Soon Hyundai Commercial" on YouTube.) In the commercial, Mrs. Cha reenacts studying for the written test and practicing for the road test.

TEACHING TIPS

A Central to the story is the fact that Mrs. Cha wanted to get her driver's license. To give students additional writing and speaking practice, you could say, *Mrs. Cha wanted to get her driver's license. What do you want to do?* Students write three sentences beginning with *I want to*, for example, *I want to take a vacation.* Then they share their writing in a small group. You could use their sentences in one of the following activities:

1. Make a two-column chart, with students' names in one column and something they want to do in the other column. For example:

   Juana *pass the citizenship test*
   Ervin *take a vacation*

   Ask questions based on the information in the chart. (For example, *What does Juana want to do?* or *Does Juana want to take a vacation?*)

2. Play a memory game. Ask students to say one of their sentences as their classmates listen carefully. Then, one by one, point to students at random. When you point to a student, the class recites what that student wants to do.

B Another possible spin-off discussion topic for this story is: *What's easy for you? What's difficult for you?* Students make two lists and then compare their lists with a partner's.

C Yet another discussion topic is: *Is it easy or difficult to get a driver's license in your native country?* To open the discussion, you could write EASY on one side of the board and DIFFICULT on the other side. Students get up and stand near their answer.

D Just for fun, the class could sing the "Song for Mrs. Cha." The tune is "Happy Birthday."

Song for Mrs. Cha

She needed a car.
She needed a car.
She needed a car.
But she had to take a test.

She tried, and tried again.
She tried, and tried again.
She tried, and tried again,
But she didn't pass the test.

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She never gave up.
She never gave up.
She never gave up,
And she finally passed the test.

E If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on work or transportation.

UNIT 8 Man's Best Friend

Bobby is known as "Greyfriars Bobby" because he kept his 14-year vigil in the graveyard of historic Greyfriars Church in Edinburgh. The stone on Bobby's grave reads: "Died January 14, 1872, aged 16 years. His loyalty and devotion were an object lesson to us all."

UNIT 9 The Coin

The *Illawarra Mercury* reported that the coin—a 1959 Australian threepence—was lodged between Marie's vocal chords and prevented them from vibrating. The coin wasn't spotted on the X-ray because it was thin and resting in a horizontal position. Marie's mother no longer puts coins in her Christmas cake.

TEACHING TIP

If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on holiday traditions.

UNIT 10 Love or Baseball?

It was actually one of his girlfriend's friends, not the girlfriend herself, who spotted Joe walking through a local store without his bandage. Joe told the *MetroWest Daily News*, "I didn't even know I'd got caught until she called me later that night."

"How's your broken leg?" his girlfriend asked. "It's healing," Joe replied. She asked him why her friend had seen him walking through the store. The truth came out, and the relationship ended minutes later. "A stupid baseball game means more to you than me," Joe's girlfriend said before she hung up the phone.

Joe said he was disappointed the romance ended because he "kind of liked the girl," whom he'd dated for five months. Still, he didn't regret his decision to choose the game over the girl. "Girlfriends come and go," he said, "but you only get one chance to see the game that sent the New York Yankees to the World Series."

TEACHING TIPS

A In the Writing / Discussion Exercise, students circulate throughout the room looking for people who share their interests. Students who participated in field-testing this activity spontaneously came up with the question they needed to ask: *Do you like to _____?* However, once they found classmates with matching interests, they had trouble spelling their names. So, before students circulate, you might want to review the question *How do you spell your name?*

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B If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on leisure activities.

UNIT 11 The First Day

Crystal works at a large call center where twelve operators handle about 3,000 calls a day. So it was not very likely that the 911 call from Crystal's aunt would be routed to her—and yet it was. Crystal's voice remained calm throughout the call; students can listen to a snippet of the exchange between Crystal and her aunt in a one-minute video on YouTube. (Search "Crystal Morrow 911.")

TEACHING TIPS

A Another possible topic for discussion is reporting emergencies. If you teach in the United States, you could open the conversation by saying, *In the United States, people call 911 in an emergency.* Then ask the following questions:

- What number do people call in your native country?
- Do you have a story about calling 911 in an emergency?
- Do you have a story about calling 911 by accident? (For example, did your baby call 911 on your phone?)

There was laughter in my class of adults when some people shared stories—for example, the police showed up at one couple's door after their six-year-old son called 911. He had reported them for child abuse after they put a limit on the amount of time he could spend playing video games. (The matter was quickly cleared up.)

B Students could practice making emergency calls. You could structure the activity with the dialogue below. Students answer the questions in writing and then read the dialogue aloud with a partner.

911 Operator: What's your emergency?
Caller: _____
911 Operator: What's the address?
Caller: _____
911 Operator: OK. What's your name?
Caller: _____
911 Operator: What's your phone number?
Caller: _____
911 Operator: _____
Caller: Thank you.

UNIT 12 The Winning Ticket

In California, the scratch-off lottery tickets like the ones the woman in the story bought are called "Scratchers." They can be purchased from cashiers or from vending machines at many locations.

When the woman scratched off the pictures on her lottery ticket, she saw $25,000, another $25,000, and a gold nugget. The gold nugget functioned as a wild card, meaning

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the woman won the $50,000 “instant prize.” She threw the ticket on the counter because she assumed she needed three of a kind to win.

Ms. Costabile was a college student who worked part-time at the drugstore. She told the *San Jose Mercury News* that she never considered keeping the ticket. “I don’t think I would have felt good, knowing it was somebody else’s ticket,” she said.

TEACHING TIP

In many countries, drugstores sell only medicine and other health-related products, in contrast to the United States, where drugstores sell a wide variety of items. If you teach in United States, you could introduce this story by asking students to name items they’ve seen for sale in drugstores in the United States. You could then ask if drugstores in their native country are different from drugstores in the United States.

UNIT 13 Thank You

In the story, the lines wrapped around the whale’s body are described as “fishing lines.” They were actually crab-trap lines—nylon ropes that link crab traps. Each rope is about 240 feet long, with weights every 60 feet. The whale had about 20 of these lines wrapped around its body. As the whale struggled to free itself, the lines became tighter and made visible cuts in its blubber. In addition, at least 12 crab traps were hanging from the whale. Each trap weighed 90 pounds, and the weight of the traps was pulling the whale down, making it difficult for it to keep its blowhole out of the water.

Did the whale really return to thank the divers? The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported: “Whale experts say it’s nice to think that the whale was thanking its rescuers, but nobody really knows what was on its mind.” Still, the divers who freed the whale believed that it was expressing gratitude. “It felt to me like it was thanking us, knowing that it was free and that we had helped it,” one diver said. “I never felt threatened. It was an amazing, incredible experience.” The man who witnessed the rescue from the boat added, “You hate to anthropomorphize too much, but the whale was doing little dives and the guys were rubbing shoulders with it. I don’t know for sure what it was thinking, but it’s something that I will always remember. It was just too cool.”

TEACHING TIP

Male humpback whales sing the longest and most complex songs in the animal kingdom. On the Web site of the American Cetacean Society (and on other Web sites as well), students can listen to recordings of their songs.

UNIT 14 Together Again

In a 1999 interview with the *New York Post*, Orestes Lorenzo revealed that his decision to defect was not on the spur of the moment. He had become increasingly disillusioned with the Cuban government and was becoming more and more withdrawn at home. When his wife suspected he was having an affair, he had to tell her that he was contemplating leaving Cuba, whispering because he feared that microphones were planted in their home. She whispered back, “Go. Escape.”

Once he arrived in the United States, he worked relentlessly to be reunited with his family. He wrote countless letters, appealed to the U.S. Congress, and testified before the United Nations.

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When Orestes flew to Cuba to retrieve his family, he intended to land on the beach but overshot it. So he was forced to land on the highway, narrowly avoiding a head-on collision with an oncoming truck. Orestes and the stunned truck driver both slammed on their brakes and stopped within yards of each another—so close that Orestes could see every line on the driver's face. He had 40 seconds to get his family into the plane and take off again before missiles could target him. "Even I thought the plan was crazy," he told *People* magazine, "but I had to try. I would rather die than leave my family there." When the plane crossed the 24th parallel and left Cuban air space, Orestes turned to his wife and said, "We're together—together forever."

In 2000, Orestes's parents and two brothers, along with their families, immigrated to the United States. The Lorenzo family lives in Florida.

TEACHING TIP

In the Writing/Discussion Exercise, students make lists of things they like and dislike in the United States and in their native countries. If your students are in their native country, you might ask them about the place where they are living. What do they like about it? What don't they like about it? They make two lists under the headings *Like* and *Don't Like* and compare their lists with a partner's.

UNIT 15 Saved by the Bell

Newspaper accounts do not mention the fate of Leonardo's climbing companions, so it is assumed they made it down the mountain safely.

Leonardo was a novice climber, and it was his first time on the mountain. When he became separated from his friends in a blizzard, he wasn't worried initially. "Since it was my first climb," he told a reporter from the *Sunday Herald*, "the storm looked beautiful to me and I enjoyed it." It wasn't until the next day that he realized he was in grave danger. By the end of the day, shortly before he was rescued, he could no longer move his extremities.

Representatives from the phone company called Leonardo every half hour while he was waiting for the rescue team. "The calls injected me with human warmth, with strength," he said. During one of the calls, his cell phone battery went dead. Leonardo remembered that when he was a child, he used to extend the life of batteries by putting them in the freezer. So he buried the dead battery in the snow. Half an hour later, it was working again.

When he was safely off the mountain, rescuers called the phone company in Bogota to tell everyone that Leonardo was OK. There was a celebration in the office.

The expression "saved by the bell," incidentally, was originally a boxing term. At the end of a boxing round, a bell is rung. If the bell rings before a knocked-down boxer is counted out, he or she can get up and continue fighting in the next round. It has come to mean "rescued at the last minute."

TEACHING TIPS

A In the Discussion Exercise, students make a list of supplies to have on hand in case of an emergency. On the Web site of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there are lists of supplies needed for specific disasters—earthquakes, floods, radiation, wildfires. The rule of thumb is that there should be enough supplies to last for three days. In addition, it is recommended that each family have a disaster supply kit that could be taken along

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with them in case they have to evacuate their home. Here are some items that are common to many lists:

- First-aid kit (containing hydrogen peroxide, antibiotic ointment, pain medication, diarrhea medicine, bandages, scissors, tweezers, thermometer, instant cold packs for sprains)
- Three gallons of water for each person (enough for three days)
- Canned or packaged food (enough for three days)
- Food and water for pets (enough for three days)
- Nonelectric can opener
- Paper cups and plates; plastic eating utensils
- Pre-moistened towelettes
- Candles
- Sturdy shoes
- Sleeping bags
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered radio
- Extra batteries
- Tools (screwdriver, pliers, hammer, adjustable wrench)
- Fire extinguisher
- Copies of important documents, kept in a waterproof container

B If you teach adults and like to pair stories with life-skills topics, this unit would be a logical tie-in to lessons on leisure activities and reporting emergencies.

UNIT **16** This Is the Place for Me

On Walter Polovchak's 18th birthday, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that although Walter and his lawyer "have not exactly beat the system that ruled, alternately, for and against them, they have outlasted it."

In 1980 Walter refused to accompany his parents back to Ukraine, which was then part of the Soviet Union. "Never I go back," he vowed. President Carter granted Walter political asylum. During the ensuing five-year legal battle, conservative political groups championed Walter's cause; the American Civil Liberties Union backed his parents' efforts. When Walter turned 18, his parents sent him a telegram that read simply, "Best Wishes. Congratulations. We wish you well." Walter's father died in 2008, and his mother died in 2016.

For the most part, Walter has lived quietly in a Chicago suburb, his name surfacing only occasionally in the news. In 2000, he reentered the limelight during the Elian Gonzalez controversy when he voiced his opinion that Elian should stay in the United States. (Ultimately, Elian's story turned out differently from Walter's; Elian was taken from his relatives' home by eight armed immigration officials and returned to his father in Cuba.)

In 2005, Walter was invited to speak to the Ukrainian community in Chicago. He concluded his speech by thanking the people who supported him when the decision he made as a 12-year-old left him without parents in a new country. "Your encouragement," he said, "helped make a difficult process more bearable and gave me determination when I needed it most."

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TEACHING TIPS

A After students read the story, you could remind them that the immigration officials said, "Walter can stay in the United States." But U.S. courts said, "Walter has to go back to Ukraine." Ask students to raise their hands and vote: How many think the immigration officials were right? How many think the courts were right? Alternately, you could write *Stay in the United States* on one side of the board and *Go Back to Ukraine* on the other side of the board. Students stand near the statement that aligns with their opinion on the way the case should have been decided.

B To turn the Discussion Exercise into a whole-class activity, draw the graph on the board, replacing the drawings in the book with simpler figures: a happy face, a sad face, and an "OK" face (with a faint smile). Students come to the board and put an X on the line at the place that reflects the way they feel. More often than not, students will put their X in a predictable place; that is, those who have lived in a new country from six weeks to six months will put their X on the descending line, while students who have been in the new country longer will put their X on the ascending line. This activity reassures students that their feelings reflect normal stages in cultural acclimation and are shared by others in the class. Point out that the ascending line to the "OK" stage is more gradual than the steeper and shorter descending line to the sad state.

UNIT **17** Nicole's Party

Nicole met Tasos, who lived in London, on a beach in Greece, where they were both vacationing. After a whirlwind transatlantic courtship, Tasos gave her a four-carat diamond engagement ring. Nicole was a kindergarten teacher, and at the end of the school year, she resigned her position to devote herself to planning for her November wedding, which cost her father $125,000. "It was supposed to be a fairy-tale wedding," she told the *Daily News*. "Well, it did have a happy ending. There just wasn't a groom."

At the rehearsal dinner the night before the wedding, Tasos had joked, "It's a good thing Nicole has my passport. I'm having second thoughts." Everyone laughed. The first sentence turned out not to be true; Nicole didn't have his passport. But the second sentence was true; Tasos was indeed having second thoughts. On the day of the wedding, he vanished without a trace. He was later found at a luxury resort in Tahiti, on his honeymoon alone. "I just wanted to get away," he told reporters. Tasos's reasons for backing out of the wedding never became public.

Four years after being jilted, Nicole became engaged to another man. That time, the groom showed up for the wedding.

UNIT **18** A Strong Little Boy

Newsweek reported that when Jimmy was pulled from the water, his body temperature was 84 degrees, and he was clinically dead. At the hospital, he was put on a cold mattress and given drugs to induce a coma to reduce the risk that his brain would swell, a potentially lethal complication of near-drowning.

Jimmy is now a healthy adult, six feet tall. However, according to *USA Today*, "his recovery was marred by learning disabilities and his parents' divorce." Doctors who treated Jimmy refuse to speculate on whether the learning disabilities were the result of oxygen deprivation while he was submerged in the water.

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UNIT 19 The Champion

The story recounts Takács's experience at the Hungarian National Pistol-Shooting Championship in 1939, where people asked him, "Did you come to watch?" That scene was replayed nine years later at the Olympic Games in London. When Carlos Valiente, the current world champion and Olympic favorite, spotted Takács, he asked him, "Why are you here?" Takács replied, "I'm here to learn." After Takács won the gold medal (beating the world record by 10 points), he took his place on the podium next to Valiente, who finished second. Valiente turned to him and said, "You have learned enough." When Takács won his second gold medal in Helsinki in 1952, he became the first repeat winner of the rapid-fire pistol event.

TEACHING TIP

In the Writing/Discussion Exercise, students write about a national hero. Alternately, they could write about a personal hero—a parent or grandparent, for example.

UNIT 20 The Bottle

Some readers—especially those who were born long after the Vietnam War ended—might wonder why Hoa Van Nguyen fled his country.

Vietnam was part of French Indochina until 1954, when communist forces led by Ho Chi Minh ousted the French. Subsequently, the communists took control of the North, and the United States supported the South, at first economically and then militarily. The United States withdrew from Vietnam after signing a cease-fire agreement in 1973. Two years later, the North Vietnamese overran the South.

Hoa was one of an estimated one million South Vietnamese whom the North Vietnamese confined in "reeducation camps." When he was released in 1979, Hoa and his brother joined the throngs of Vietnamese "boat people" and fled in a small fishing boat. Eventually, they found their way to a refugee camp in Thailand, where Hoa met his future wife. Finding Mrs. Peckham's bottle was extraordinarily lucky, not only because the Peckhams were able to help the Nguyens get settled in Los Angeles (the Peckhams found them an apartment and partially furnished it), but also because the connection to the Peckhams probably shortened the time the family spent in the refugee camp. They were there two years, but it was not unusual for refugees to spend five or even 10 years in a camp. Finding the bottle may also have helped Hoa psychologically. In an interview with *People* magazine, he said, "It gave me hope."

TEACHING TIPS

A According to the story, Mrs. Peckham and Hoa wrote "back and forth." As a follow-up writing activity, students could write pen pals in their class. You could organize the activity this way:

1. Students write their names on small slips of paper. The papers are put facedown on a desk. Students draw a name.
2. Students spend about 15 minutes writing a short letter to the person whose name they drew. In their letters, they first tell something about themselves and then ask two questions. (You may need to act as a scribe for students with limited writing skills.)

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3. Students sign their letters and deliver them to the student whose name they drew.
4. The recipients of the letters write a reply. (Again, allow approximately 15 minutes.)
5. The replies are delivered to the original sender.
6. If the students seem to enjoy writing to in-class pen pals, the correspondence could continue in a subsequent class period.

B Another possible writing activity is to ask students to imagine this: *You are walking on a beach when you find a bottle. In the bottle, there is a piece of paper with a name, an address, and a message. The message is, "If you find this bottle, write to me." Write a short letter to the person who put the message in the bottle. Tell the person a little about yourself.*

UNIT **21** The Last Laugh

The contest was actually broader than the one presented in the story. Jodee worked for a national restaurant chain, and the contest was among the waitresses at all the chain's restaurants in a region of Florida. (All the servers at this chain are female.) First, the waitresses at each restaurant competed to see who could sell the most food and drinks during the month of May. Then the top waitresses at each restaurant entered a drawing. Jodee's name was picked. So it is conceivable that the prize for winning such a contest could be a new car.

Lawyers for the restaurant chain argued that Jodee should not be allowed to pursue her case in court. When she was hired, she had signed an employee handbook, indicating her acceptance of company policies. One policy stated that an employee with a complaint against the company had to try mediation before suing. However, the judge ruled that the company handbook was not a legal document and that Jodee had the right to sue.

Jodee was not allowed to reveal the exact terms of the settlement. It is assumed that the company, not the regional manager, paid for the new car. What model Toyota did Jodee choose? Her lawyer could not disclose the details but said that Jodee could "pick out whatever type of Toyota she wants."

TEACHING TIPS

A Some of the students in one class that participated in field-testing this story were not familiar with the *Star Wars* movies or the character Yoda. The teacher briefly explained the character this way: *Yoda was in many of the* Star Wars *movies. He was a teacher. People went to him when they had a problem, and he always had good ideas for them.* Lack of familiarity with Yoda did not impede students' comprehension of the story, however.

B The idea for the Writing / Discussion Exercise is from teachers Sharron Bassano and Mary Ann Christison. They believe that student drawings provide a focus for oral interaction, reduce tension, and build a feeling of community spirit through shared experience. I have certainly found that to be true in my class when I ask students to draw a picture before speaking.

C An alternate Writing / Discussion Exercise is: Ask students to imagine they can go to a car dealer and pick out any car. They do not have to pay for it. What car will they choose? Ask them to draw a picture of their "dream car" and share the picture in a small group.

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UNIT 22 Old Friends

In 1962 the Communist party wanted Charlie to say that the U.S. Marines had treated the Chinese badly. (The "soldiers" in the story were actually Marines.) Charlie refused, saying he'd forgotten the past. He was convicted of suspicion of espionage and sentenced to seven years in a labor camp followed by 10 years of house arrest. When his house arrest ended in 1979, Charlie decided to contact his old Marine buddies. His mother had burned his Marine possessions—including his address book—in an effort to protect him, but Charlie remembered three addresses that he had memorized 31 years earlier. He wrote three letters, and one reached its destination. When he got off the plane in the United States in 1983, four of his former buddies met him. Charlie greeted them with the words "Semper Fi," short for the Marine motto *Semper Fidelis*—always faithful.

Charlie became a U.S. citizen in 2000 and an "honorary Marine" in a ceremony in 2002. In an interview with the *Chapel Hill News*, Charlie said, "I've always considered myself a Marine. Some of my old friends came for the ceremony. Some of them were in poor health, but they came anyway. They said they wouldn't miss it for the world. It's a very happy day, not only for me, but for all my good friends in the Marines."

Charlie's restaurant, which he named Tsing Tao after his native village, was a success. He retired from the restaurant business in 2007.

TEACHING TIPS

A In the Writing/Discussion Exercise, students draw pictures of dishes from their native countries. These pictures could be displayed in the room and used as the basis of a lesson in which students practice ordering in a restaurant.

B The story also invites a discussion of tongue twisters. Tell the students, *The American soldiers couldn't say "Chi Hsii." The Chinese words were difficult for them. There are English phrases and sentences that are difficult for English-speaking people to say. These words are called "tongue twisters."* Following are some simple tongue twisters for students to try:

- She sees cheese.
- great gray goats
- Mrs. Smith's Fish Sauce Shop
- The soldier's shoulder hurts.
- Fred fed Ted bread, and Ted fed Fred bread.
- A big black bug bit a big black dog on his big black nose.

Students could also share tongue twisters in their native languages with the class.

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